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BOURASSA

DUTY OF CANADA AT THE PRESENT HOUR



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# *The Duty of Canada* *at the present hour*

BY

**HENRI BOURASSA**

*Director of LE DEVOIR*

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*An address meant to be delivered at Ottawa, in November  
and December, 1914, but twice suppressed in  
the name of "Loyalty and Patriotism"*

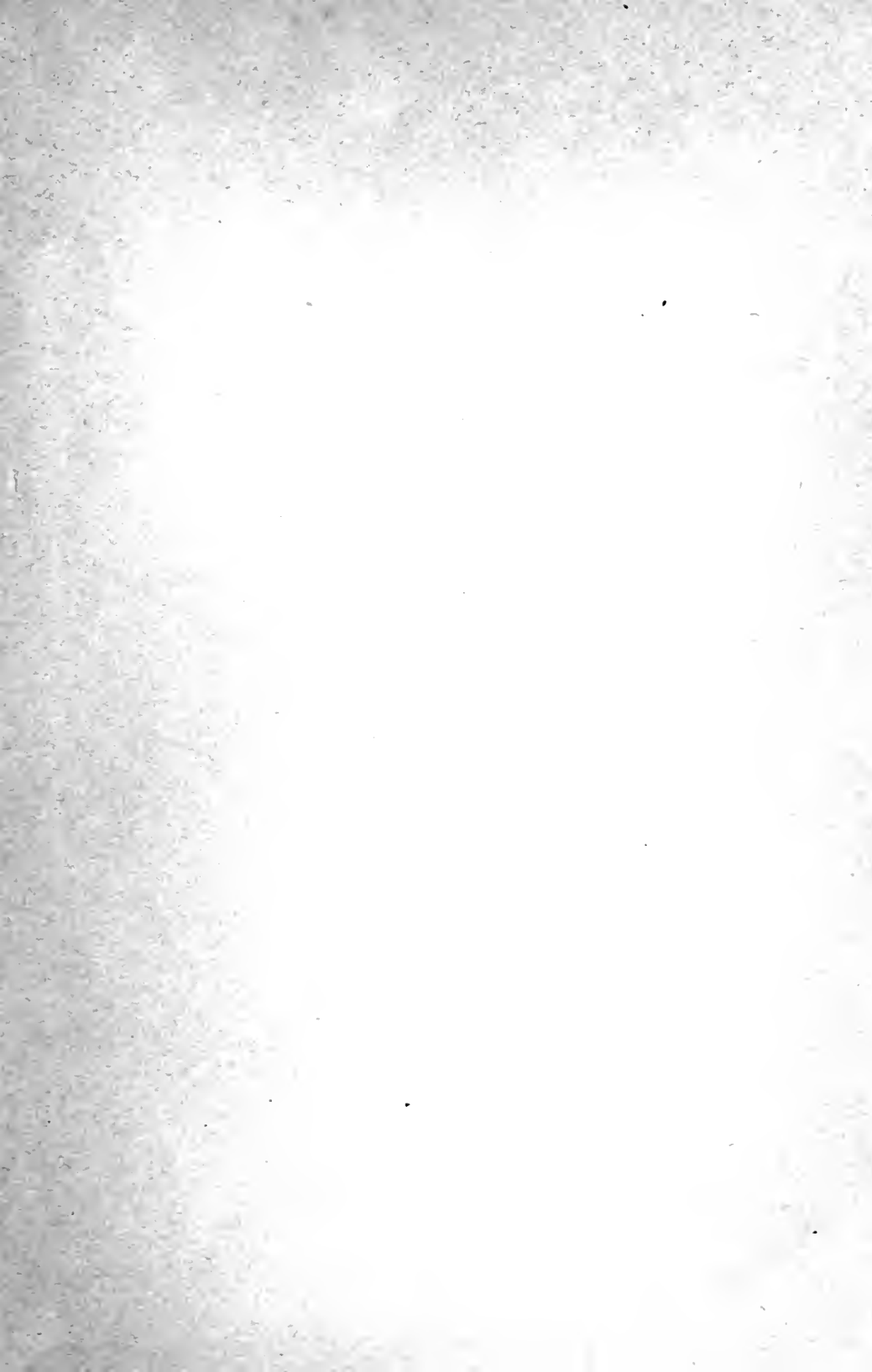


PRINTED AT *LE DEVOIR*

43, St. Vincent Street.

MONTREAL

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## *To all fair minded readers :*

*The following is practically the text of an address prepared at the request of the People's Forum, of Ottawa, in November last. A few paragraphs have been added and slight corrections made, in order to bring it up to date when it was to be delivered at the Russell Theatre, on the 17th of December 1914.*

*In both instances, the speaker was prevented from delivering the address. Intimidated by threats of violence, the members of the People's Forum cancelled their invitation. Hooliganism and rowdyism, led by men bearing the uniform of the King and waving the Union Jack, prevented a peaceful and respectable audience from hearing the speaker, at the Russell Theatre.*

*Whether the sentiments and opinions expressed in the address justified this double and successful attempt at stifling free speech in this "free" British Country, is left to the calm judgment of fair-minded readers.*

*To some it may be of interest to know that this address is almost entirely made up of extracts from the speaker's previous declarations published in *Le Devoir*, since the outbreak of the war. It contains all the statements which were the object of the fiercest denunciations of the 'loyal' press. It includes also the context giving the true meaning of the writer's opinions as expressed in fact. Thanks to a careful and systematic suppression of that context, the 'loyal' press succeeded in creating the legend of the writer's 'disloyalty', and clamoured for a severe punishment of his 'treachery'.*

*The same process was resorted to in regard to other articles published in *Le Devoir* and dealing with the policy pursued by Sir Edward Grey and the British government previous to the war. These will soon be translated into English and published in pamphlet form.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> *The Foreign Policy of Great Britain, 1915, at the office of *Le Devoir*, price: 25 cents.*

\* \* \*

*The writer can well afford to laugh at the easy game played against him by all dealers in 'cheap loyalty'. The same game was played for all it was worth, at the time of the South-African War. The writer has survived it, and will pass through this one, in the minds at least of those people whose opinions and sympathy he cares for.*

*The only serious aspect of the situation is the marked growth of intolerant and arrogant jingoism. There is, for all true Canadians, a danger to be more dreaded than the expansion of German militarism in Europe: it is the moral conquest of Canada by Prussianism under false British colours.*

*These brutal attempts at stifling free speech and slandering all Canadians who do not choose to worship the god of blatant jingoism have also a detrimental effect on the good relations between French and English-speaking Canadians.*

*Who can deny that, had the writer called himself John Brown or William Jones, and expressed his views in English, the absurd campaign of slander and misquotation to which he has been subjected would never have taken place? He might have been criticised: no sane man would have thought of calling him a 'traitor' worthy of the gaol or the scaffold. No one would have suggested the suppression of his paper.*

*Since our high-sounding 'patriots' appear to be so much concerned with the triumph of the Entente Cordiale in Europe, they might begin with a certain effort at doing elementary justice to their French-speaking fellow-citizens in Canada.*

HENRI BOURASSA.

*Montreal, January, 1915*

*As a fair sample of the spirit of "true British loyalty" which animated the instigators of the movement raised to prevent the delivery of this address, a lithographed copy of the circulars freely distributed to raise the 'patriotism' of the 'loyal' people of Ottawa is annexed hereto.*

# BOURASSA, THE DIRTY

Henri Bourassa in his paper, *Le Devoir*, pursues his contemptible, snaky policy of seeking to deceive the French-Canadians as to the real motives and reasons which impelled England to enter this war—is endeavoring, as he has been endeavoring for years, to make it appear that there is no honesty among English statesmen and that they are to-day fighting for France and for Belgium not because of any principle but solely for the reason that at the moment, to put it plainly, it suits their selfish motives, and that tomorrow, did it suit them, they would be with Germany and against France.

We quote extracts from his article, "The Consequences to Canada," as follows:—

"If the Kaiser had given to the British Government the absolute assurance that Germany would construct, during the next ten years, no warship, no torpedo boat, no submarine, no Zeppelin, not an English soldier would have crossed the Channel—neither to "save" France nor to protect the neutrality of Belgium.

"English statesmen are not able to be at the same time loyal to their country and faithful to their alliances. On every occasion they have sacrificed international loyalty to their duty toward their own country."

Nor is this all. Speaking of the causes leading up to the war, Bourassa deliber-

ately charges the Canadian leaders with having deceived the people of Canada into taking action to help England.

He states that they have "grotesquely misrepresented the real causes of the conflict and the true nature of the relations of France and England."

"It was necessary at all costs that this Canadian aid should take an exaggerated, blustering, loud-mouthed form, worthy of the rich and corpulent parvenus who dominate high finance, commerce and the politics of the Canadian nation. It was necessary that it should profit, above all, boodlers, vampires, furnishers of bribes and of election subscriptions, traffickers in boots made out of unseasoned leather and of razors made in Germany. Glory be to the Empire!"

And so he goes on, this preacher of discord and strife, this snarling Ananias, seeking to stir up rebellion in the hearts of his French-Canadian readers by making it appear that everything is wrong, everything vile, everything corrupt—nothing honest, nothing sincere, nothing worthy.

And this is the man to whom we are asked to give a "courteous hearing"—this fomentor of strife, this breeder of rebellion, this hater of all things British, this cowardly misrepresenter of facts—this journalistic snake in the grass.—  
KINGSTON STANDARD.

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This man Bourassa is announced to give a public address in Ottawa, on Sunday evening, Nov. 22nd, at the Imperial Theatre, Bank Street, opposite the Alexandra Hotel.  
Will he get a "courteous hearing?"

# Hot Shot for the Empire's Enemies

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The BOURASSA faction have cast contempt and defiance in the faces of the loyal citizens of Ottawa. They are well aware of his outrageously false and treasonable utterances since the outbreak of the war. They know that his presence in Ottawa is OBJECTIONABLE, OFFENSIVE and EXASPERATING to all loyal citizens, which means the overwhelming majority of our population, yet these abettors of treason and rebellion are determined to flaunt before us this ARCH TRAITOR OF CANADA, under the hypocritical pretence that "freedom of speech" demands the sound of Bourassa's voice in the Capital, and no one else will do. They cannot plead ignorance, they know that BOURASSA IS A REBEL, and that is the sole reason why they want him. They have thrown down the gauntlet, and we accept the challenge. They are seeking trouble, and they'll find it. Can this nest of traitors overawe and overcome the stalwart loyal men of Ottawa? The police—both Civic and Dominion—are with us and against the rebels. The militia—both officers and men—are with us and against the rebels. The citizens generally, of all races and creeds, are with us and against the rebels. Who then is afraid to TURN OUT AND PUT DOWN THIS OUTRAGE?

The women suffragists of England have had courage to smash windows and fire buildings and assault persons when it seemed necessary. Are we inferior to them? The Ottawa traitors have declared war on the loyalists, and we must surrender or fight.

The issue will be decided at the

**Russell Theatre, Wednesday Evening, December 16th**

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Admittance fee or no admittance fee—be there just the same.

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**THE SKULL OF REBELLION MUST BE SMASHED**

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Read and pass on to another man.

# THE DUTY OF CANADA

## AT THE PRESENT HOUR

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Canada, an Anglo-French community, bound to Great Britain and France by a thousand ties, ethnical, social, intellectual and economic, has a vital interest in the preservation of France and Britain, in the maintenance of their prestige, power and action in the world. It is therefore the national duty of Canada to contribute in the measure of her resources and by such means of action as she may command, to the success and above all to the *endurance* of the combined efforts of France and Great Britain. But if we want our contribution to be effective, if we mean to keep up the effort, we must face with clear-sighted resoluteness the grim realities of the situation; we must calculate the exact measure of our means of action, and secure first the internal safety of Canada, before we attempt to settle the affairs of the world.

Whether Canada has or has not a strict obligation to help, directly or indirectly, the cause of France and England, one fact is indisputable: the effects of this tremendous conflict will be deeply felt in Canada as in the rest of the world. It will be particularly disastrous in Canada on account of certain local and accidental causes: intense immigration in late years, exclusive dependence upon British capital, extravagant speculation, excessive borrowings by public bodies and individuals, etc., etc. Canadians are just on the point of realising how poor Canada is, financially speaking. They are just beginning to perceive that they have been living extravagantly on borrowed money, which they are called upon to pay back at the very moment they are unable to do it. The crushing weight of the burden will be increased in proportion to our

direct contribution to the war: the larger that contribution the greater the strain upon our meagre financial resources, not to speak of the stoppage of our industries and the weakening of our military forces, which may be needed to preserve internal peace. (\*)

If a general collapse is to be avoided, these aspects of the situation call for the immediate attention and co-operation of all men of good will. And they must be viewed primarily from the point of Canada's interests.

### Canada first

To some, the Empire is all and every thing; others think of France only; another category, logical but narrow in their Canadian exclusiveness, see nothing beyond the borders of Canada: they seem to ignore our most conspicuous world's responsibilities.

These various feelings indicate a singular absence of a truly *national* patriotism. They show a marked contrast with that strong and practical sentiment which binds in one solid mass the people of other countries, the moment the vital interests of the nation are at stake. Since the outbreak of the war, the country has been flooded with "patriotic" speeches and writings; but those words have been followed with very few deeds for the good of Canada.

This marks all the difference between the thoughtful action of sovereign peoples, masters of their destinies, conscious of their responsibilities, and the thoughtlessness of a child-nation, deprived of international status, unable to measure the consequences of its actions and even to foresee the repercussion of the movements of other nations, including that from which it depends.

(\*) In his address before the Canadian Club of Montreal, on the 14th of December, the Finance Minister, Mr. White, stated that the war budget will require an annual borrowing of \$100,000,000, till the war is over. This is equivalent to the total yearly expenditure of the country, for all national purposes. It does not include the war pensions, a large portion of which will be paid, for many years, to residents of the United Kingdom.

Everyone speaks of the duties of Canada to Great Britain or France. Who has thought of the duties of Canada to herself?

It may be objected that it is too late to consider the question: the parliament and people of Canada have decided upon it, emphatically and unanimously; the active participation of Canada in the European war is settled; to pursue that participation with full strength and celerity is all that remains to be done.

The answer to that objection is that it is never too late for nations or individuals to think of the consequences of their actions.

We are yet at the beginning of the war. If, as generally asserted and as decreed by parliament with apparent unanimity, Canada is bound to share actively in this war, it is assuredly the duty of the Canadian government to make our participation as efficient as possible, and to minimise the grave effects of that participation upon the economic and social life of the country.

It is also the duty of all citizens to help the government with such advice and information as may guide its movements. In all national crises, the government is not to be considered as a mere group of politicians of doubtful or diverse ability, temporarily invested with authority. The men in office represent the power of the nation. They ought to be enlightened, informed and advised. They must even be supported till they are guilty of betrayal. National accord demands the adjournment of party quarrels and acrimonious discussions; it does not however impose silence in face of danger, nor complicity in any crime or error; nor does it call for any sacrifice of principle.

### *Economic aspects of the war*

When a country means to make war, or to share in war, the first duty of its rulers is to take the necessary steps to keep up the economic life of the country. "Battles are won with pounds sterling as much as with bullets", as was very

truly said by the genial Chancellor of the Exchequer. That they are won with wheat sheaves still more than with gold, he might well have added, — had he not meant, of course, that with her enormous wealth and reserve of gold, Great Britain is well able to purchase corn and other foodstuffs.

There is something ludicrous and painful at the same time in contrasting the ineffectiveness of war preparation in Canada with the practical and effective methods followed in the countries of Europe.

In France and England, — not to speak of Germany where it was carried to the point of perfection —, no single regiment was put on foot, no man-of-war despatched for action, before the most elaborate and effective measures had been adopted and put into execution in order to maintain the credit of the country and its financial institutions, to provide for the storing of foodstuffs, to prevent the cornering of food and the rise of prices, to keep up the trade and industries of the country, and even to profit by the exclusion of German trade from foreign markets.

In this peaceful, mercantile and rural community, apart from a few measures of finance, nothing has been done, except a tremendous display of wordy patriotism, with a view to enlisting as many men as possible, fit or unfit for warfare.

The determination of the Canadian Government, as enunciated in Winnipeg by the Solicitor General, is to bankrupt Canada to save the Empire. Considering that practically all the creditors of Canada are London bankers, and that the British government is most anxious to maintain the credit of the United Kingdom, the execution of that *patriotic* program would hardly contribute to the strength, glory and prestige of the Empire. (\*)

(\*) In his address above referred to, Mr. White has fortunately sounded a different note:—"In order, said he, to meet our interest payments abroad, sustain our share of the burden of the war and promote to the greatest possible degree prosperity throughout the Dominion, it is the duty of all Canadian citizens to co-operate in producing as much as possible of what can be used or sold. For Canada at this juncture the watchword of the hour should be: PRODUCTION, PRODUCTION, and again PRODUCTION".

Were I not afraid of compromising the Finance Minister in the eyes of 'loyal patriots', I might say that this conclusion, and most of the Minister's



## France and Japan

As a fitting example of the sound views held upon the economic aspect of war in countries where the sense of responsibility prevails, Canadians may well meditate on the attitude taken by the most authoritative journal in France upon the intervention of Japan in the European conflict. According to a dispatch published in the *Montreal Gazette*, on the 14th of December, *Le Temps* "intimates with caution that Japan's needs are mainly financial, since she requires immense sums for the development of China to which her attention is directed since her failure to obtain an entry into more distant markets."

By the military intervention of Japan on the battlefields of Europe, France would have more to gain than any of the nations allied against Germany. Yet the most thoughtful Frenchmen, who know that the credit of their country would be seriously affected by a financial crisis in Japan, would rather see her stay at home. What sensible Canadian would dare assert that Canada's military intervention in Europe can equal what Japan's would be, or that Canada running bankrupt would hurt less the credit and strength of the United Kingdom than Japan's financial stress can affect the money power of France?

To keep up the credit and the prosperity of Canada, first, for the sake of Canada, and, secondly, for the benefit of Great Britain and her allies; ought to be the main object of every level headed and truly patriotic Canadian.

It is but a few weeks since one of the most authoritative London journals, the *Westminster Gazette*, was obliged to remind us that we could render better service to the Motherland and the Empire by growing wheat than by raising soldiers. (\*)

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speech, is but a synopsis of all that has appeared in LE DEVOIR since the outbreak of the war. It is to be hoped that the sensible and truly patriotic views of the Finance Minister will prevail over the bankruptcy program of the Solicitor General.

(\*) "A good many Canadian farmers find it difficult to leave their farms for the front. They may rest assured that by staying in Canada and growing wheat for us in 1915, they will perform a very real service to the Empire".—("Westminster Gazette", quoted in the *Montreal "Star"*, Oct. 9th, 1915).

In the first weeks of the war, one of the most thoughtful and practical statesmen of the Empire, Lord Milner, warned Great Britain, the British Empire, and the world at large, of the dire menace of famine, which is sure to follow in the footsteps of war.

### Famine next year

Famine has ever been the hideous twin sister of war.

In numbers of combatants, the present war surpasses everything heretofore recorded in history. Within a few months 20,000,000 men will be fighting. From all indications, the decisive victory of one or the other of the rival coalitions is still far distant. To the victors as well as the vanquished, it will cost, in men and money, a price beyond all precedents and the most extravagant pre-calculations.

What will then be the situation of the world?

The total yield of corn in the world is 650,000,000 quarters. Of this, 530,000,000 is grown in the countries now at war, not including Turkey.

Of the 20,000,000 men now or soon to be engaged in fighting, a considerable proportion, probably the majority, belong to rural classes. Another large number were employed in carrying on industries connected with agriculture: farm implements, chemicals, fertilisers, sugar, dairy, etc., etc. Ten, twelve, fifteen million people, heretofore employed in producing or helping to produce the essentials of life, will do nothing, for months or years perhaps, but help devastate the patrimony of the world.

Suppose war were stopped this winter — a most improbable not to say impossible conjecture — what would be the yield of corn next year? The first crop, sown in the fall of the year, is mostly grown in the countries now at war. The second crop, maturing in summer, comes principally from America, North and South. How many fields have been put under crop, this autumn, in France, Belgium, Germany Austria and Russia — not to speak of Roumania, Bulgaria and the magnificent plains of Lombardy, all of which may be cut

to-morrow by trenches and transformed into vast graveyards? And consequently, how much bread will mankind have to eat from the spring to the fall of 1915?

If rulers and peoples, in countries distant from the fields of battle, do not take immediately the most energetic and exceptional measures to meet the exigencies of the situation, misery and hunger will soon be the hard fate of a vaster number of human beings than has ever been mentioned in history. For the world at large it will be far worse than war. The actual fight is and will remain confined to Europe and small portions of Asia and Africa. The plague of famine will strike the whole world.

In drawing the attention of the people of Great Britain to that peril more threatening than war, Lord Milner has given proof of his true and intelligent patriotism. At the very time other British statesmen were starting, with moderate success, their campaign of oratory to stimulate the enlistment of troops, he did not hesitate to urge the enlistment of an army of rural labourers. In his opinion Great Britain should put, next year, 6,000,000 acres under wheat crop, instead of 2,000,000 as she has now. If it is considered necessary for the United Kingdom, directly engaged in the European conflict, to treble her rural army at the risk of sending to the battlefield a number of troops hardly superior in number to the small Belgian army, how far more urgent and practical would it be for Canada to follow Lord Milner's advice!

Now, what *has been done* in Canada in that respect? What *could* be done? What *should* be done?

### "Get back to the Land!"

"*Get back to the Land!*" Such is the timely and pressing advice given by many *patriotic* politicians and publicists, though in no greater hurry to go and till the soil than they are of shouldering their muskets for war, in spite of their tremendous efforts to induce *other people* to enlist.

The advice is excellent; but if it is to be followed by any large number of unemployed city dwellers, it requires some-

thing more than verbal commendations. In so far as it applies to the great rural provinces west of Lake Superior, where the production of wheat could be increased on the largest scale, the situation has been aptly illustrated in a cartoon published in the *Grain Growers' Guide*. One unfortunate city man, attracted by the cry: "*Get back to the Land!*" starts in search of a farm lot. He climbs to the top of a telegraph post along the track of the Canadian Pacific Railway. As far as his sight can reach, he is unable to find one single foot of free land. On each lot is planted a post with a sign: "*Canadian Pacific Railway Lands*", — "*Hudson's Bay Company Lands*", — "*Canadian Northern Railway Lands*" — and the whole series of grabbing firms and so-called Colonisation Societies, created during the last quarter of a century by our politicians, much to their own profit. At the foot of the telegraph post, a patriotic cur yaps and yelps to its heart's content: "*Get back to the Land!*"

### *The cornering of land*

Those powerful corporations, Hudson's Bay Company, Canadian Pacific Railway, Mackenzie and Mann, and many others, have accumulated colossal wealth at the expense of the country. From the State, — federal, provincial or municipal, — they have received innumerable subsidies supplied by the consumers and ratepayers of Canada. Why do they not put gratuitously at the disposal of unemployed Canadians a portion of the vast domains they have received as a gift at the hands of the people of Canada? Some of the heads of those corporations, in possession of great personal wealth, pose as "pillars of the Empire". Out of their shareholders' treasury, of course, they have subscribed substantial contributions to the Patriotic Fund. To their employees and labourers they have imposed a further contribution to the same Fund, already too large for its destination. At the same time, they have thrown on the streets a large number of their dependents.\* (\*)

(\*) The contrast between the English conception of true patriotism and ours was strikingly illustrated by a significant incident. One of the

They might have shown their patriotism in a more effective way by endeavouring to solve the problem of unemployment and stimulate the production of foodstuffs. Had they put under cultivation their vast waste lands, they could have kept at work the numerous labourers they have thrown on public charity. Should they persist in doing nothing to help in this crisis, the government and parliament of Canada have a strict duty to bring them to task. In England, where respect for private property and freedom of trade have been brought to the extreme, the government has not hesitated to deal summarily with all attempts at cornering foodstuffs. Firms and individuals who tried that profitable operation have been virtually despoiled of their accumulated goods. Is it not as legitimate and urgent to put an end to the cornering and unproductiveness of land? Foodstuffs come from the soil. It is the duty of the people of Canada to draw from their soil the largest production possible, in order to keep the cost of food at a proper level for the consumers of Canada, and increase the supplies of those nations of Europe for which we profess so much friendship and loyalty.

### Unemployment and food production

If the government and parliament are sincere in their wish to help Great Britain, France and Belgium, if they really want to bring our people *back to the land*, to diminish unemployment and misery, and stimulate the production of food, they have a clear duty to perform: let them put the State, temporarily at least, and without disbursement, in possession of a portion of the immense waste lands cornered by the

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large firms of London, enjoying the patronage of Queen Alexandra, subscribed £2,000 to the Patriotic Fund. At the same time the salaries of its employees were reduced. This being known, the subscription chèque was returned to the firm with notice that the patronage of the Queen Dowager was withdrawn. In Canada, a large portion of the Patriotic Fund has been 'sponged' in that manner. Our Shylocks, far from being condemned by public opinion, are lauded to the skies as models of true patriotism. Some of them will reach the Senate and their names will soon appear on decoration lists. True, they are also generous subscribers to electoral funds. Patriotism is still the refuge of scoundrels.

C.P.R., the C.N.R., the Hudson's Bay Company and the multitude of real estate companies, most of which include among their directors, shareholders and profit grabbers, a large portion of our *patriotic* statesmen, politicians and publicists. That being done, efficient and strong measures should be adopted to enlist and organise the "civil army". This was the first care of the Patriotic Committee in France; it was immediately followed with practical action and fruitful results. The unemployed of our large cities should be enrolled and put in active service on the land. That army should be equipped with building material and farm implements *made in Canada*, with horses and cattle, seed, etc. Naturally, it cannot be hoped that this work could be accomplished without a certain waste of money and boodle, — though less, I think, than in the raising of an army; for, in military organisation, the exigencies of "loyalty" and "patriotism" forbid any enquiry into, or the slightest comment upon, the profitable operations performed under shelter of devotion to the Empire.

Such or similar measures of practical patriotism should have been taken the very first day war was declared, whether Canada participated in it or not. They have been rendered more imperative on account of the enormous expenditure connected with our participation, and the consequent increase of the economic disturbance of the country. Were they adopted immediately, in spite of the deplorable loss of so many weeks of precious time, numerous and fruitful results would accrue.

### The results

First, the production of food being largely increased, both the consumers of Canada and those of the allied nations would be partially protected against the frightful inflation of prices which is bound to take place within a few months.

Last year, the government and parliament thought it necessary to create a Commission of enquiry in order to ascertain the cause of the then growing cost of living. Is nothing to be done when the people of this country are face to face with

the certainty of a much higher cost synchronising with general stagnation in business, unemployment of labour and financial stringency?

The second good result of these measures would be the decongesting of large centres. The burden upon municipal exchequers and private charity would be materially alleviated. Thousands of unproductive consumers, threatened with hunger and misery, an easy prey to the temptations of debauchery and disorder, would be turned into active and contented producers. Let there be no dilution: if nothing is done in that sense, there will be riots in more than one Canadian city, before one year or even six months are over.

A third result would be to stimulate several industries, now at a standstill.

The construction of cottages, barns and stables would require building material of various sorts: timber, lumber, bricks, cement, corrugated or galvanised iron-sheeting, etc., etc. Most of those articles would come from our soil and forests, and pass through the various manipulating processes of our factories. Before they were used by the rural producer, their extraction and fabrication would have given bread to the woodman, the brickmaker and the factory labourer; our carrying trade would be enhanced by their transportation.

Those farm implements, shovels, picks, axes, etc., would be the output of our factories.

In August last, the Massey-Harris firm, excluded from its vast European markets, temporarily threw out of employment 5,000 Canadian employees and labourers. If the Federal government, with the help and co-operation of the governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, undertook to stock five, ten or fifteen thousand new farms, the farm implement factories could keep running during the whole winter and save from misery thousands of Canadian men, women and children.

And what about the permanent and ultimate result? By the placement, in the midst of the virgin prairie, of ten or fifteen thousand new homesteads, the State expenditure would be eventually paid back a hundredfold. This would be true national colonisation, far more useful than the wholesale

import of foreign immigrants, carried on at a very high cost for the last fifteen years. A similar effort could be attempted on a smaller scale, in their respective spheres of action, by the governments of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and British Columbia, where vast stretches of land could be opened to settlement.

### Intensive cultivation

The production of vegetables, eggs and poultry could be largely increased in the neighbourhood of large towns. Around Montreal alone, thousands of acres of land laid waste by the real estate craze of late years could be turned back to their previous state of useful production. A similar situation exists, I am sure, around Toronto, Winnipeg and most Canadian cities. The municipal authorities should be legally empowered to take hold temporarily of those lands and induce a good number of unemployed labourers to put them under intensive cultivation. The cost of city life would thereby decrease, and thousands of people be kept in comfort instead of having to seek refuge in the various homes of public charity.

Through all the Eastern provinces, the growing of wheat could also be stimulated and largely increased at very little cost. Wheat production has been gradually abandoned in these provinces. Why? Largely, of course, on account of the fall in prices after the opening of the vast prairies of the West. This will be practically overcome next year by the abnormal rise of prices. The second cause is the exhaustion of those substances in the soil specially needed for the germination of wheat. If a bag or two of good wheat-seed were distributed to the owner of every farm, the soil of which was once capable of wheat growing, with a proportionate quantity of such chemicals as the nature of the soil may demand, it would be comparatively easy to raise in the Eastern provinces of Canada a sufficient quantity of wheat for their own consumption. The consumers of Great Britain France and Belgium could then get the benefit of the whole of our Western crop, which could be nearly doubled.



The production of pease, barley and maize could be stimulated in a similar way.

“Keep the factories running”

In order to face the grave situation confronting the country, another series of practical measures should have been devised and could yet be adopted with a view to keeping up industrial production and fostering the export of manufactured goods. Naturally, to be fruitful, such measures require the active co-operation of public powers and leaders in finance, industry and trade. In this respect, as in the matter of agricultural production, there has been much talk but very little action. Just as the unemployed were advised to *get back to the land* without anything being done to give them land and help them in putting those lands in a state of production, likewise, our talking economists have limited their activities to empty words: “*Capitalists, keep your factories running*” — “*Consumers, curtail your expenses, and buy nothing but home-made goods.*” Very good mottoes, no doubt; but the pious and patriotic warning to be frugal and buy nothing but home made goods, is singularly weakened by the knowledge that the Canadian volunteers were supplied, at the expense of Canada, with razors *made in Germany* and purchased at a cost considerably higher than the retail price before the war!

As to the demand that factories be kept running, it must not be forgotten that factories cannot be operated with patriotic expostulations: manufacturers need money as well as raw materials; they need also a consuming market for their goods, and means of transportation to reach those markets. (\*)

(\*) If the Finance Minister is sincere in his desire to stimulate industrial production in Canada, he will undoubtedly see that the Canadian banks, so stiff and so sparing in their advances to national trade and industry, do not export \$100,000,000 of Canadian savings as a subscription to the latest loan of the British government. This foolish step would be the more unjustifiable that the British loan of \$1,750,000,000 was much over-subscribed in London. If the Canadian banks have \$100,000,000 to spare for investment abroad, they surely could make use of it to stimulate national production.

### What England did

The contrast between the highly patriotic and effective measures taken in England to keep up and even enhance the trade and industry of the United Kingdom, and the complete inaction of Canada, is simply lamentable. It was brought under vivid light in an interview given to the *Montreal Gazette*, on the 7th of September last, by Mr. P. G. Donald, delegate of a large section of the iron-mongers of Great Britain.

The moment war was declared, the men interested in the vast trade connected with the steel and iron industries set themselves to immediate action, with a view not only to keep up their business but also to snatch that of their German rivals. They besieged the government Board of Trade till they got what they wanted. Then they immediately started to look for new fields of operation all over the world.

It is a favorite pastime among colonials to laugh at the "sluggish and clumsy Englishman", at his inaptitude for turning a sharp corner and facing a new and unexpected situation. In ordinary circumstances, the criticism may be well founded; but in time of national crisis, the English, as the French, the Germans or the Americans, — as the citizens of all sovereign states, conscious of their responsibilities, — arise from their apathy and take without delay all measures tending to place their country and themselves in a position enabling them to support the extraordinary burdens imposed by circumstances. In Canada, a country under tutelage, rulers and leaders of public opinion rest content with making patriotic speeches and pouring out inflamed prose. Business men catch the craze and do nothing. The only activity displayed is that of the political bloodsuckers, boodlers and corrupt publicists, who speculate on the childish patriotism of the nation, the equipment of troops and the gathering of patriotic subscriptions.

In forty-eight hours, the delegate of British trade, without waiting for the arrival in London of alert American agents, had prepared his calculations, packed his trunks and started for Canada.

He wanted to take advantage of the emergency session of parliament; but parliament, having voted millions for the

war, had prorogued after singing "*God Save the King*", without giving a thought to such measures as could have helped the manufacturers, labourers and consumers of Canada to face the terrible crisis which confronts the country.

On his arrival in Canada, Mr. Donald meets our manufacturers and offers them good bargains; but their calculations are not yet made. Finding that prices may be higher here than in the United States, he suggests an export premium to be paid by the government in order to make up the difference.

He has an interview with our minister of Commerce, member of the Imperial Commission appointed three years ago to enquire into the natural resources of the Empire and promote inter-imperial trade. In Sir George Foster he finds "a remarkably shrewd man, who saw the whole case and all its points". But the minister says he is powerless and can do nothing till parliament is called again in four months' time.

### Why wait four months ?

"Four months' time!" says Mr. Donald. "In four months' time Canada may have lost her chance to get the trade that the Germans have lost. The United States is not so slow. They started their representatives for England immediately after the outbreak of war with patents and samples of stuff with which they hoped to replace articles formerly supplied by Germany. They are certain to get a great deal of business.

.....  
"Besides, why wait for four months instead of acting now and getting your working men at work that much earlier. It seems to me an idle waste of time when faced with an opportunity that will pass. Another argument used to me was that they could not borrow money at this time. That is ridiculous. If they have an acute stage of unemployment, they will have to borrow money anyway to tide over the depression. The better way is to coin Canada's own resources, and there is a market for it, if they are willing to take the necessary steps to get it. For example, suppose that a bounty of \$1 a ton was paid on exports derived from iron, that might be just the difference between being able to compete successfully with American manufacturers, and not being able to. On ten thousand tons I would say that at least \$250,000 would be expended in wages, so that as a result of such a small expenditure they would get a full return in extra taxes because of the new business, and save the expenditure of five, ten or fifteen times as much to meet the situation created by an enormous amount of unemployment."

In order to vote a war budget of \$50,000,000, soon to be trebled, it was found urgent to call parliament in extraordinary session; but to convene parliament in order to make an advance of \$10,000 to a national industry, stimulate the trade, and transportation agencies of Canada, give food to Canadian labourers and their families, and alleviate the sufferings of the Canadian people, is neither urgent nor useful!

To send thirty, forty, fifty or one hundred thousand Canadians to risk their lives for the United Kingdom, who sends to the front less than fifteen per cent of her troops, fifty, one hundred or two hundred millions are not too much. But to pay \$10,000 as the initial step to enable a thousand Canadian labourers to earn \$250,000 in wages, thereby giving subsistence to four or five thousand Canadian people, Faugh! This is too mean a preoccupation for our bombastic and gigantic *Empire Saviours*.

Then, what profit would accrue therefrom to politicians and their suppliers? On army equipments, on boots made with raw cowhide, the soles of which split at first use, on razors *made in Germany* and paid at double the price, on coats and blankets burned by the thousand, on slaughtered horses, on permits of leave *sold* to the troopers, fat profits are made. Fie upon matters which bring nothing!

### *The bonus policy*

Whether the measure proposed by Mr. Donald was the proper one to adopt, I am not prepared to say. The merits or the demerits of the proposal could have been discussed in parliament, after a prompt and thorough enquiry by technical experts. Short of such enquiry and discussion, Mr. Donald's argument remains that the proposed policy has fostered the trade of Germany and the United States. A similar policy was adopted and maintained in Canada during many years — the only difference being that the bonus then paid on certain iron and steel products went up to \$4 a ton, while the premium suggested by the British delegate could have stood, he thought, at the low figure of \$1 a ton.

The bonus policy remained in force in Canada so long as it was thought necessary to keep up the value of the heavily watered stock of certain corporations in which a large number of politicians of both parties were interested, as holders of shares and debentures many of which had been received in exchange for "*special services*". A premium of \$4 to enrich a handful of politicians is excellent. A premium of \$1 to give food to thousands of Canadian workingmen, women and children, to bring to the industries and trade of Canada the benefits theretofore reaped by the Germans and now snatched by the Americans, is not worth considering.

### *Our trade goes to the United States*

Repulsed at Ottawa, the British delegate went to New York. His orders, in addition to others of the same nature, from England, France and Russia, will keep the Pittsburg factories in full blast during eighteen months. American industries will be benefited, American capital will grow, American labour will be employed, American men and women will be fed. Meanwhile, our politicians will keep crying out to the unemployed of Canada: "Enlist for the Empire, so that we may purchase boots, uniforms and blankets. When you walk barefooted along the roads of Europe, remember that your broken boots have been to us a good source of profit. When you sleep in trenches filled with snow or water, remind yourself of the ten per cent commission, kept for the Patriotic or Boodle Fund, on the price paid for your thin blankets. When you shave, don't forget that those *German made* razors have cost to Canada but double their price. Glory to the Empire!"

Being asked whether Canadian industries could not get later on the benefit of his or similar offers, Mr. Donald frankly warned us against such delusion:

"If arrangements are made by British merchants with United States manufacturers for the supply of this they cannot break contracts already made"

This is clear and peremptory. It is true British honesty. Thanks to that high standard of commercial honour, and also to their bold conceptions, their executive energy and constant care of *their* interests, the British of *Great Britain* have become the masters of the world's finance and trade.

Let it be well understood by our manufacturers, traders and workingmen: if they have lost the benefit of millions worth of British trade, it is not due to the "stupidity" of the British or their "indifference to the colonies", but to the incapability and corruption of our politicians, and the "stupid indifference" of our business men.

### "Imperial sentiment" and business

Another striking passage of that remarkable interview is that in which the British delegate gives the measure of the "Imperial sentiment" of the London traders. "If the United States man offers to sell us what we want for \$30 a ton and the lowest price the Canadian manufacturer can sell for is \$35 a ton, *I do not think the British merchant could let Imperial sentiment guide him to the extent of buying the Canadian article.*"

Some may feel indignant at this new evidence of British "selfishness". I don't. It is, to my mind, a splendid lesson of true patriotism given with admirable candour. It forms a wholesome contrast with the stooping hypocrisy of some of our dealers in jingoism. This true Englishman tells us plainly: "We think of ourselves first; do the same, and let us try to make a bargain profitable to both".

In their dealings with the "sister nations" of the Empire, the people and traders of Great Britain apply the principles practised by the British government in their relations with foreign powers and colonies alike.

To France and Germany, to Belgium and Russia, Sir Edward Grey, in the last days previous to the war, held this invariable language: We will keep peace or make war, according to our interests. Great Britain will either support one and fight the other, or remain neutral, according to the exigencies of her situation and at such time as her interests are involved.

To the manufacturers of Canada, the British trade delegate says: We will deal with you if it pays us. But if we can make more profits by dealing with Americans, we will trade with them.

Once more, it is clear, loyal and peremptory. Far from having any spite against those masters of trade and finance, we should thank them for the practical lessons and examples they give us free of charge. Instead of taking towards the Motherland and the Empire the ridiculous attitude of fervid and trembling lovers, we should learn from the British to look after our own interests and do profitable business.

### Army supplies

As regards army supplies, the Imperial government, whose overflowing treasury enables them to lend *without interest* \$50,000,000 to Belgium and \$4,000,000 to Servia, could well afford to make a slight sacrifice in placing a larger share of their orders in Canada in preference to the United States. To the soldiers supplied to Great Britain we pay four times as much per day as the British government give to Tommy Atkins; nor should it be forgotten that four-fifths of the "Canadian" troopers are British-born immigrants, who should normally serve in the British army. Besides, Canada, who already pays to the London bankers a good interest on \$500,000,000 and over, is on the point of increasing her national debt by \$100,000,000 or \$200,000,000 in order to help Great Britain with a large number of troops, thereby enabling her to spare so much of her blood and money. The Imperial government could also take into account the fact that whilst Canada supplies them gratuitously not only with troops but with flour and cheese as well (which can hardly find room in the over-filled docks and warehouses of London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Hull and Bristol), there is actually more misery and unemployment in Canada than in the United Kingdom.

But as regards trading companies or individuals, it is another matter.

As clearly pointed out by Mr. Donald, if the London trader, guided by Imperial sentiment, purchased Canadian products

at a higher price than that asked by the Americans for the same articles, "someone else would come over, get the cheaper article, and he would not continue in business long."

Bully for him! This is the thought and word of a true merchant, a true Englishman, a true patriot.

### The "shopkeepers" of England

Lord Rosebery once said how stupid it was for Englishmen to take offence at Napoleon's saying: "England is a nation of shopkeepers".

To her shopkeepers, still more than to her statesmen, sailors and soldiers, England owes her wealth, strength and glory. They are the true "pillars of Empire".

Why? Because the 'shopkeepers' of England, not satisfied with making of their shops the centre of the world's supplies, never lose sight of the *collective* interests of British trade, the basis and mainspring of British power. In spite of their individual rivalries and competitions, British traders never fail to unite to a man in order to maintain their common interests against those of the rest of the world, foreign and colonial alike.

That collective action is not confined to mercantile interests. More than once England was saved by the patriotism, energy and combined efforts of her 'shopkeepers'.

When the traders of the City combined to put a check on the loan negotiated by Philip II with the Bank of Genoa, the expedition of the Great Armada was postponed to the following year, and England was saved from foreign invasion or attack. When those same traders prepared the return of Charles II, they saved their country from anarchy and militarism.

When Pitt in distress appealed to the voluntary subscriptions of the British people to pay the foreign legions fighting against Napoleon, the movement was headed and kept up by the merchants of the City.

The great Corsican had good reason to hate the 'shopkeepers' of England: their patriotism and their gold crushed his power more effectively than Wellington's grenadiers.



May Heaven give us business men imbued with one hundredth part of the patriotic 'selfishness' of the British traders, and ready to do for Canada what the 'shopkeepers' of London are always prepared to do for their country!

### What remains to be done

A precious time has been lost, rare opportunities were missed; yet it is not too late to do something. In all likelihood, the war will last long. If we have failed to do our duty at the start, let us prepare to amend matters in the near future. To counteract the sinister influence of the politician who thinks of nothing but party interests, — and party funds gathered under the shelter of patriotism and devotion to the Empire, — let all true Canadians take the matter in their own hands and show themselves as truly patriotic, active and practical as the British or French have shown themselves.

Of course, the millions lost to Canada by our own neglect cannot be recovered: as was well said by Mr. Donald, we cannot expect the British trader to break his word to the American manufacturer just to save us from the consequences or our own stupid inactivity. But many good business operations can yet be carried out in England, France and Russia, to the mutual advantage of Canada and the allied nations. Canadian commercial agents should be sent at once to those countries with the object of securing a multitude of orders which, instead of going to neutrals, would bring profit to our labour, trade and industry.

### Transportation rates

A third point calls for the immediate attention of all Canadians who are willing to help *effectively* the allied nations and keep up the economic life of our own country; and that is, the control of our sea-going trade, of foodstuffs especially.

On that point again, the Englishman has shown himself wider awake than our own politicians and traders to the exigencies of the situation. Mr. Donald has called the attention of

the Canadian government and people to the anomalous conditions of our shipping trade:

“There has to be some arrangement by which you get better shipping terms. Do you know that the freight from Antwerp to Montreal is eight shillings and from Montreal to London twenty shillings a ton? What is that doing but giving foreign trade an unfair advantage and penalising the Canadian manufacturer? Is that patriotic? That state of things should change. It is not necessary, either. I know it costs much more to load and unload ships than to transport the cargo from one port to another. The cost of transportation is relatively small. I may illustrate that by telling you that, while the freight from Antwerp to Montreal is eight shillings, that from Antwerp to London is five shillings six pence. Two shillings and six pence represents the difference of all the rest of the way across the Atlantic. The freights from New York are much cheaper than from here, again placing a hardship on the Canadian manufacturer”.

Is it credible that our trade with Antwerp should get the benefit of rates lower by 60% than those to and from Liverpool?

Most of our trade via Antwerp is trade with Germany. It was stated recently by one of the chief officials of the most important milling concern in Canada, that a large proportion of the wheat and flour exported from Canada in the last two years is now stored in German granaries and warehouses.

### Canada feeds the Germans

We have heard much, during those two years, of the ‘German menace’. It was urged, by men who pretend to have long foreseen the danger, that Canada ought to meet it by increasing the naval forces of the Empire. Would it not have been just as practical to take some measures to prevent the enemies of the Empire from storing food at Great Britain’s and our own expense? Even to-day, why does not Canada follow the example of Australia and take efficient measures to prevent our food supply from going, via New York and Rotterdam, to feed the ‘barbarians’ so fiercely denounced by our patriots? Thanks to the improvidence of our Saviours of Empire and the greediness of some of our traders, — many

of whom have largely and ostentatiously subscribed to Patriotic Funds, — the men who are now shooting down British troopers and, in a few weeks, will take Canadian volunteers as their mark, are fed with the produce of the soil of Canada!

“*Is that patriotic?*” could well ask that sturdy English trader.

The usurers of London who corner gold have been branded by Lloyd George as supporters of the enemy. Are not those Canadian politicians and traders, who feed the enemy, traitors to the Empire?

The question of maritime transportation rates should be taken up immediately and dealt with in the most energetic manner. Of course, the difficulty is largely increased by the fact that the British government has taken over for imperial service a large number of our so-called ‘Canadian’ vessels, and thereby struck a terrific blow to Canadian trade and industry. This in itself constitutes a direct and substantial contribution to Imperial service, of which very little has been heard so far.

But since we are deprived of a large portion of what we deluded ourselves into calling our mercantile navy, could we not follow the example of the United States? Could not our statesmen, jurists and leading business men put their heads together and devise some means by which Canada could control her sea-going trade and prevent Germany from getting our foodstuffs in preference to, or even in competition with, England, France or Belgium, the cause of whom we pretend, with such display of oratory, to have espoused so heartily?

### Canada helps German armaments

Some Ontario journalists have *discovered* recently that the Krupp factories are supplied with nickel extracted from our mines at Sudbury.

The fact was pointed out, more than five years ago, by Mr. Olivar Asselin, who demonstrated that the British and Canadian governments could put a stop to all German naval construction. If the parliament of Canada had then expro-

priated the Sudbury mines and cornered the production of nickel in Canada for the sole use of British shipbuilders, even at a profit to Canada, it would have done to the British Empire a far greater service than by building six dreadnoughts or sending 100,000 untrained men to the front.

Why was it not done? Why was it not suggested by the British Admiralty? For the simple reason that the enormous profits derived from the patented use of nickel in the making of armour-plates and cannons were controlled by a pool which included the German shipbuilders and their English rivals. The stoppage of German naval construction and of the making of German heavy artillery might have spared us this war and kept Canada and the whole Empire at peace; but it would have curtailed the enormous profits derived by the shareholders of Vickers-Maxim, Cammell-Laird, Armstrong-Whitworth, as well as those of the great German firm at Essen, to which these British firms are, in fact, financially allied.

What is the result? The German bullet that will pierce the forehead or the breast of our Canadian boys has been hardened with Canadian nickel; the shrapnel which brings slaughter and untold sufferings to thousands of British and Canadian soldiers has been rendered more deadly because of the use of Canadian nickel in the making of German cannons.

The high-sounding patriots, now so busy with their mouth and their pen at urging *other people* than themselves to go and fight for the Empire, might well have thought of this long ago.

### Criminal neglect

As may be seen, there was and there is still more than one means of helping the cause of the allies and fighting their enemy. (\*)

(\*) Had it not been beyond the purview of this lecture, I might have added that Canada could also every materially help the British government by loosening the restrictions placed upon Hindu immigration. The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Harcourt, has recently appealed to both the Canadian and Australian governments to do something in order to relieve the feeling of

That such measures have not been taken or seriously discussed from the first is easily explained by the utter lack of experience, in matters of war, on the part of our public men and people in general. But as time goes on, the men responsible for the welfare and security of Canada — and this includes not only the men in public office, but all leaders in finance, trade, etc — get the full benefit of the example set to them, not only by Great Britain and France, or by the United States, but also by smaller nations like Switzerland, Holland or Denmark. Their neglect is becoming criminal. It suggests the suspicion that in order to serve certain sinister interests, they will do nothing to prevent or alleviate the financial distress of the country or the miseries of the poorer classes. It will more than nullify the effectiveness of our military demonstration. It is tantamount to a betrayal of the cause of the allies and of the vital interests of Canada as well.

### *The number of men*

As to the number of men, it is more than doubtful if the Canadian government acted wisely in pledging themselves to send to the front one, and perhaps two or three hundred thousand men. Such an effort surpasses, in proportion, what is being done by Great Britain herself. In his parliamentary statement of the 17th of September, Lord Kitchener declared that the total number of British forces then at the front was "rather more than six divisions of infantry and two divisions of cavalry". That was equivalent to about eighty-five thousand men; let us say one hundred thousand.

If Canada sends 100,000 men, out of a population of 8,000,000, the United Kingdom, with its 46,500,000 people

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unrest and irritation in India over the exclusion laws of the white colonies. In June last, one of the men highest in authority, in the India Office, told me that if Canada could see her way to make some concessions to India, "it would be worth, for the preservation of the Empire, all the dreadnoughts and super-dreadnoughts Canada may build". If nothing is done, and promptly done, in that matter, there will be trouble before long in India. The attitude of the ultra-loyalists of British Columbia, upon that question, is a striking example of the fallacy of so-called Imperial 'unity' and 'co-operation'. It shows the shallowness and hypocrisy of many professions of 'devotion to the Empire'.

should keep at least 600,000 men at the front. This is precisely double the figure which Lord Kitchener, on the 25th of August, indicated as the total to be reached by the month of February or March.

What are the available military resources of the United Kingdom?

Before the war broke out, the Regular Army stationed in the British Isles counted in round numbers 300,000 men; the Territorial, a trifle less. In his last speech in the House, on the 16th of November, Mr. Asquith declared that 700,000 new recruits had joined the Regulars, and 300,000, the Territorials. This would place the total land forces of the United Kingdom at nearly 1,600,000 men, out of which less than fifteen per cent are fighting at present on the battlefields of Europe.

### The Ulster volunteers

Another significant figure is that of the Ulster volunteers who have joined the colours. On the 17th of September, according to the *Montreal Star's* special correspondent, only 5,070 had then enlisted. Their number is now estimated at ten to twelve thousand. In July last, Sir Edward Carson boasted of having at his disposal more than 100,000 men, enlisted, equipped and armed, ready to shoot at the British flag. In other words, out of 100,000 Ulstermen, willing to fight *against* Great-Britain, less than 15% have enlisted to fight *for* Great-Britain. It looks as if "devotion" to the Empire was still less conspicuous in 'loyal' Ulster than in 'disloyal' Quebec; — not to mention the fact that, according to the same source of information (*Montreal Star*), Sir Edward Carson was very reluctant in handing over his arms and ammunitions to the Imperial authorities.

If the financial outlay is taken into account, the lack of proportion between the effort of Great Britain and that of Canada is still greater. The wealthiest nation on earth pays to her soldiers, in war time, from one shilling six pence to two shillings per day; Canada, poor and heavily indebted as she is,

pays \$1.10 per day to her volunteers, more than eighty per cent of whom, born in the British Isles, ought normally to serve in the British army and get the pay of their brothers in the United Kingdom.

What conclusion is to be drawn therefrom? That the government and people of Great Britain are remiss in duty? No, far from it; but perhaps they have better calculated the possibility of their effort. Perhaps also have they been less preoccupied with the number than with the value of their troops.

As early as the 25th of August, Lord Kitchener declared his determination to "have an army in the field which in numbers will not be less than in quality and not be unworthy of power and responsibility of the British Empire."

In a country deprived, as England is, of the system of conscription, to organise in a few days an army strong in number and quality is no easy matter. The bravery of the soldiers is not the sole factor of a modern army: technical science on the part of officers, strength and efficiency of weapons, training, discipline and proper equipment of troops, all these count for much. In Lord Kitchener's thought, the best service Great Britain can render France and Belgium, the safest way to do honour to the British Empire, is to send to the front nothing but excellent troops, well armed, equipped and trained.

### *Training and equipment of troops*

Canada is far worse prepared with war equipment than England herself, inferior as Britain may be in that respect to all continental countries. Yet, our ministers do not seem to have given a single thought to those considerations, which have weighed so heavily upon the mind of the British War Secretary. They seem to have thought only of one thing: raise quickly a big number of recruits. Out of the thirty-one thousand volunteers gone, and of the twenty thousand now being enlisted, how many are prepared to do honour to Canada, and maintain the power and responsibilities of the Empire?

How have they been trained? How armed, clothed and shod?

The dismissal by the Imperial authorities of two hundred Canadian officers from the first contingent is rather conclusive evidence of the levity with which that contingent was organised. (\*)

Naturally, the total lack of experience of our Ministers, in war matters, the long standing and complete neglect of all preparations to make of our militia an efficient force of defense, have to be taken into account. Many errors, light or grave, ought not to be brought as a charge against the Minister of Militia and the officers in charge of the Val Cartier Camp. But that very lack of competency and preparation imposed upon them the duty of confining their effort to their ability and the means of action at their disposal. Nothing could excuse them from looking to essentials: a good choice of officers and men, the discipline of troops and their proper equipment.

On the conduct and discipline of troops, such a "loyal" paper as *l'Action Sociale* had to denounce the misconduct of a large number of soldiers. According to that journal, the peaceful inhabitants of Quebec had come to the point "of doubting whether they should not take means to protect themselves as well as their wives and daughters" against the enterprises of the defenders of the Empire. "At Lévis, the

(\*) The significance of that fact is the more serious that the British Army is in sore need of capable officers. As early as the 25th of September, one of the military experts of the "Times", gave this note of warning, which justifies entirely what I wrote in "Le Devoir", to the great scandal of our mouth and pen warriors:

"An army cannot be improvised at a moment's notice; and instances in which improvisation has been attempted in the past have been lamentable failures. Experienced officers are dubious concerning the armies which England is now raising at home because they do not think they will be ready to fight in the field for eighteen months, and then only if they have been trained by professional officers, the numbers of whom are limited and are being constantly decreased by losses in action.

"The question of officers is a serious one. An examination of our casualty list shows we have lost already over 1100 officers, in killed, wounded or missing. This is two out of every five among those at the front.

"More officers" is the constant call from the front and several hundred have been sent; but obviously this cannot be kept up forever and each officer sent is one less instructor for the new troops. We must not allow ourselves to become megalomaniacs and place in the field regiments which are unfit to defend the honor of our armies".



Tramway Company had been forced to enlist special guards to prevent drunken soldiers from rendering themselves masters of the tram-cars."

In two hours time, I have met, in the streets of Quebec, a larger number of inebriated soldiers, calling loudly at all by-passers, men or women, than in two weeks time, in Germany, Belgium and France; and during those two weeks, I have seen at least half a million soldiers, Prussian, Bavarian, Walloon, Flemish, French, English, Scotch or Irish. I have seen them in the camps, at railway stations, in barracks, along the roads, on duty or out of duty. Everywhere their conduct was beyond reproach.

Does it mean that the Canadian contingent contained a larger proportion of debauched men than the armies of Europe? No; — and what we read of the horrors of the war proves the contrary. But evidently discipline here was defective, even when it could be most easily exercised.

If the leaders of our small army were incapable of preventing such abuses in a peaceful and friendly country — Quebec is presumably not yet to be considered as a conquered land — is it not to be apprehended that in the excitement of war, in the enemy's country, our soldiers may forget that they bear the honour of Canada and the Empire, and are called upon to repress and not to imitate German barbarism? (\*)

As to the military training of our troops, it is to be hoped that it has been thought of, and that those young men shall not be sent to slaughter before they have learned how to use their arms and adapt themselves to the conditions of modern warfare.

(\*) The disgraceful scenes which prevented the delivery of this lecture in Ottawa have amply justified this appreciation of undisciplined soldiery. On that occasion, two thousand peaceful citizens had the disgusting spectacle of a howling rabble led by soldiers bearing the colours of the King and making use of the Union Jack, alternately to wipe their noses and to give the signal to every fresh start of rowdyism. One soldier, separate from the others, a veteran from South Africa and an invalid, endeavoured to secure some kind of peace and order. He was hooted down by the other militia men and their mob. Drunken soldiers kept on howling and fighting in the streets and tramways, to the great annoyance of the 'loyal' people of Ottawa. The "Free Press" had to denounce them, just as "L'Action Sociale" in Québec.

As to their equipment, I have mentioned some of the grossest 'errors' made: burned uniforms, slaughtered horses, boots with split soles, razors *made in Germany* and purchased at a fabulous price, etc. The rigorous attention of the military authorities and of parliament will have to be called upon these. (\*)

For the time being, it is sufficient to state that the government and parliament of Canada having decided to support Britain, France and Belgium with military help, they must regard it as their strict duty to see that our intervention in the war is useful, honourable and effective.

It is all very well for politicians and journalists, not one of whom will see German howitzers nearer than three thousand miles off, to shout: "Let us send 100,000, 200,000 men!" If they fill the camps and the trenches of the allies with untrained men, it will be a nuisance to France, obliged to feed them, and to England who endeavours to send to the front nothing but soldiers of the first quality. To send to the front ill-equipped or insufficiently trained troops, is to send them to a certain and useless death. It is murder pure and simple.

Let us hope that the thought and example of Lord Kitchener, a first-class administrator as well as a valiant soldier, will instil in the minds of our newly made war politicians one salutary thought: They have a more imperious duty than that of sending many men to fight — while they stay quiet at home. That duty is to send such troops only as can serve

(\*) The first intimation of those scandalous operations appeared in "Le Devoir". Naturally, it was considered by the 'loyal' people as further evidence of my 'disloyalty'. On the 10th of December, the following appeared in the Montreal "Star":

"Investigation of the complaints made of the quality of the boots supplied to the First Contingent show that many of them were amply justified, inferior leather being used and flagrant tricks of the trade employed to give a superficial appearance of good workmanship to shoddy material and glaring make-shifts. One firm in particular has been convicted of these "get-rich-quick" methods, but the facts are all known in Ottawa and it is to be presumed that adequate safe-guards will be taken in future".

What will be the outcome? In Europe, the perpetrators of similar crimes would be summarily dealt with. In Canada, being large purveyors to party funds, they will likely go to the Senate and be knighted. In this happy country of 'British liberty and civilisation', the 'traitor' to the Crown is not the scoundrel who robs the Crown, but the honest man who denounces robbery.

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usefully the cause that Canada has espoused, and dispute dearly their lives to the enemy.

Sir Robert Borden, I am happy to say, has expressed a similar view in his speech before the Toronto Canadian Club, on the 5th of December. (\*)

### The duty of "French Canada"

With regard to the decision of parliament to bring Canada into this war, I have little to say at present, except this, that the question should never have been placed on the ground of races.

To make a direct and special appeal to the French Canadians, because French and English are fighting side by side in Europe, is to pave the way to most dangerous possibilities. If the French Canadians are led to believe that they have a special duty to perform, because of the casual co-operation of their two "motherlands", — as England and France are now called in the Province of Quebec — where will they be the day England is again the enemy of France, as she has been during seven centuries, as she was yet in the days of Fashoda?

If this unfortunate appeal to racial feelings is persisted in, let it be done at least with something akin to truth and justice.

All sorts of nasty comments have been passed upon the small proportion of French Canadians enlisted at Val Cartier. If this and all future Canadian contingents are to be classified by races and nationalities, a distinction should be established not only between French and English-speaking volunteers, but also between Canadian-born and British-born. If all British-born soldiers were counted out from the first contingent, it would be found that French-speaking Canadians enlisted in larger proportion than English-speaking Canadians. Out of less than 6,000 Canadian-born recruits, over 2,400

(\*) Also at Amherst, N. S., on the 17th of December, where the Prime Minister is reported in the Montreal "Gazette" as having stated that "it would be detrimental to the success of British arms to send men to the battle lines unless properly trained".

were French. If English Canada is to be credited with all the English-speaking soldiers gone from Canada, then French Canada has the right to count to her credit all the Frenchmen and Belgians, residents of Canada, who have joined their colours or enlisted in their native lands. They are Canadians, just as much as the newcomers from the British Isles. It may be objected that, under the military laws of France, all Frenchmen living in Canada were *obliged* to go and serve. But apart from the fact that those laws could not reach them here, the objection has no value in the mouth of those Imperialists who claim that all Canadians have a strict duty to participate in this war.

Whatever the duty of Canada in this grave contingency, that duty commands the whole of the Canadian people, irrespective of race, creed or language.

### Constitutional aspect

Another point of great importance has been raised, in connection with Canada's participation in the war. It has been stated, in Parliament and out of it, that Canada, as part of the British Empire, is in duty bound to participate actively in every conflict in which Great Britain may be drawn.

That doctrine is contrary to all traditions, to the basic principles upon which rests our constitution, to the long standing agreement between the motherland and her self-governing colonies.

Canada, as a mere irresponsible dependency of Great Britain, has no moral or constitutional *obligation*, nor any *immediate interest* in the present war.

Great Britain has entered the conflict of her own free will, in consequence of her entanglements in the international situation. She has framed her policy and decided her action with a sole view to her own interests, without consulting her colonies or considering in any respect their peculiar situation and local interests.

The territory of Canada is not exposed to the attacks of any of the belligerent nations. An independent Canada

would be to-day in absolute safety. The dangers to which her trade may be exposed result from the fact that she is a British possession, subject to the consequences of British policy and the risks of a military intervention decided by the Imperial government upon their exclusive authority and responsibility. It is therefore the duty of Britain to defend Canada, and not the duty of Canada to defend Britain. Such was the doctrine laid down in 1854, in 1862, in 1871, by Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir George Cartier, Sir Alexander Campbell. It still holds good, in law and in fact.

Besides, in protecting the territory and trade of her colonies, Great Britain makes sure of her own subsistence.

### *The profits of Great Britain*

Of all the nations involved, Great Britain runs the least danger and will, at all events, derive from the war very substantial profits. The overwhelming superiority of the British navy is demonstrated beyond the most optimistic pre-calculations. The only real danger to be apprehended is the piecemeal destruction of the large British naval units by German sub-marines and torpedoes. This would be the penalty paid by the British people for their obstinacy in sticking to the building of dreadnoughts. It is close on three years since Lord Charles Beresford denounced the dreadnought policy as a "craze" and a "betrayal of the national confidence and of the security of the Empire". It was but last summer that Sir Percy Scott wrote of the passed utility of the dreadnought. But as a large group of English capitalists, in partnership with German shipbuilders, pocketed fair dividends from the building of dreadnoughts, the "crazy" policy was maintained. Canada was even invited to take a share in it.

During the first month of the war, two hundred German merchantmen were seized by British warships. This alone represented a clear profit of \$350,000,000 to British navy men.

The British flag already floats over most German colonies. While simple Canadians dream of nothing but battles and slaughters, — most of them three thousand miles off —

British traders go the world over and prepare to snatch everywhere the trade heretofore carried on by the Germans.

On the continent, according to Lord Kitchener's statement on the 25th of August, the British government has decided to send and maintain a force not to surpass 300,000 men in six months time.

Suppose those figures were doubled, and admitting that a large portion of those troops is of the very best, what is that effort in comparison with the alignment of at least 3,000,000 French soldiers, 4,000,000 Germans, 5,000,000 to 7,000,000 Russians, and even 200,000 or 300,000 Belgians?

The real contribution of Great Britain in this war is her magnificent navy: she keeps the trade routes of the world open to herself and her allies.

### Principles of Imperial defence

Both in the policy pursued before the war and in the measures taken to insure the safety and prestige of the United Kingdom during the war, the British government have looked upon British interests as their sole inspiration and object.

If Canada is to assume the heaviest responsibilities of nationhood, even before she enjoys its prerogatives, she could not do better than to follow the example of England.

The first duty of the Canadian Government in this crisis was therefore to consider the supreme interests of Canada, without ignoring, of course, the obligations arising from the suzerainty exercised by the United Kingdom over all British possessions.

Those obligations are not derived from a mere theory in constitutional law: they have been clearly defined by the Imperial authorities in 1854, in 1862, and at various other times. They form the basis of a well understood agreement between the British and Canadian governments.

Under the terms of that agreement, never cancelled, never amended, the United Kingdom, having exclusive control of the foreign policy of the Empire, is bound to provide alone for its general defence; and the colonies, self-governing or not,

have no other duty than that of contributing, in the measure of their resources, to the defence of their respective territories.

Upon that principle, the various Militia Acts of Canada were passed.

In conformity with that understanding, Sir John A. Macdonald refused, in 1885, I think, to supply Canadian regiments for Imperial service.

To safeguard the same principle, the Laurier government introduced the so-called *no-precedent clause* in the Order-in-Council under which Canadian volunteers were enlisted for the South African war in 1899.

In the latest official document containing the views of the Imperial authorities upon the whole problem of Imperial defence, the following propositions were emphatically stated:

“2. The maintenance of sea supremacy has been assumed as the basis of the system of Imperial defence against attack from over the sea. This is the determining factor in shaping the whole defensive policy of the Empire, and is fully recognised by the Admiralty, who have accepted *the responsibility of protecting all British territory abroad against organised invasion from the sea*. To fulfil this great charge, they claim *the absolute power of disposing of their forces in the manner they consider most certain to secure success*, and object to limit the action of any part of them to the immediate neighbourhood of places which they consider may be more effectively protected by operations at a distance”.

.....  
“4. It is scarcely necessary to point out that the system of defence for the whole colonial Empire must take fully into consideration the special conditions of the various colonies. ....  
The defence of Canada, with its long land frontier, obviously requires to be treated on a different basis from that of the small island of St. Helena”.

.....  
“19. ... Doubtless a time will come when the increasing strength and resources of the self-governing Colonies will enable them to materially assist the mother-country, by placing at her disposal for operations in any quarter of the globe bodies of troops formed from the excellent material of strong, self reliant Colonists, *but at present the development of their own vast territories in time of peace, and the effective protection of them in time of war, is undoubtedly the best contribution the Colonies can offer to Imperial defence*” . . . . (\*)

(\*) Memorandum of the Colonial Defence Committee, December 31st 1896.

Those propositions have never been disallowed or modified by the British authorities. — They stand by themselves, against any *obligation* on the part of Canada to contribute to Imperial wars outside her own territory.

Besides, Canada is still in the inferior situation of having no word to say in the Councils of the Empire, which decide whether the Empire is in peace or at war, and control the whole naval and military forces of the Empire. That position has been rightly described by Sir Robert Borden as intolerable. (\*) True, much has been said about the admittance of a Canadian representative to the Committee of Imperial Defence. But although one member of the Canadian Government, Mr. Perley, was present in London when the Imperial authorities discussed the issues which brought us into this war, we have it from Sir Robert Borden himself that the Canadian Government was not consulted by the British ministers. (\*\*)

### The example of South Africa

Therefore, had the Canadian government conformed themselves to the sole obligations resulting from our colonial status and to the strict exigencies of Imperial defence, they would have merely followed the example of the Union of

(\*) "If Canada and the other Dominions of the Empire are to take their part as nations of this Empire in the defence of the Empire as a whole, shall it be that we, contributing to that defence of the whole Empire, shall have absolutely, as citizens of this country, no voice whatever in the Councils of the Empire touching the issues of peace or war throughout the Empire? I do not think that such would be a tolerable condition. I do not believe the people of Canada would for one moment submit to such a condition". ('Debates', House of Commons, November 24th, 1910—col. 227).

(\*\*)"Having regard to the fact that there was not an opportunity for the Government of the United Kingdom to consult with the governments of the overseas dominions, as they would have done had time permitted..." —(Debates, House of Commons, (unrevised), August 19th, 1914.—col. 3 and 4).

During the ten days which preceded the declaration of war, Sir Edward Grey was in constant communication, not only with his colleagues, but also with all the representatives of the Foreign Powers. How is it that he had no 'time' or 'opportunity' to consult with the representative of Canada in London, who happened to be a member of the Canadian government]? Sir Robert Borden should have explained.



South Africa: they would have organised the defence of the territory of Canada and rendered to the British Crown, within that territory, all services possible. That duty would have been accomplished, I trust, without borrowing \$35,000,000 from the Imperial Treasury, as was done by the Botha government.

It may be objected that the Union of South Africa is exposed to internal troubles, and also to attacks from the scant German troops quartered in the German colonies of South Africa. But in other circumstances, the danger and burden of Canada would be infinitely greater. Suppose a war arose to-morrow between Great Britain and the United States: Canada would then bear the brunt of the fight. It would be our duty to resist the attack, even if that war was the result of British policy, as in 1774 and 1812. That work would be greatly facilitated if all Canadians, instead of discussing so much their so-called *Imperial* obligations, united to perform their *national* duty by fortifying the harbours and shores of Canada and making of their militia a true body of national defence instead of a recruiting ground for Imperial troops.

### Conclusion

But in the present conflict, Canada had to consider a broader duty than her 'Imperial' obligations. She had to think of her relations with the world at large.

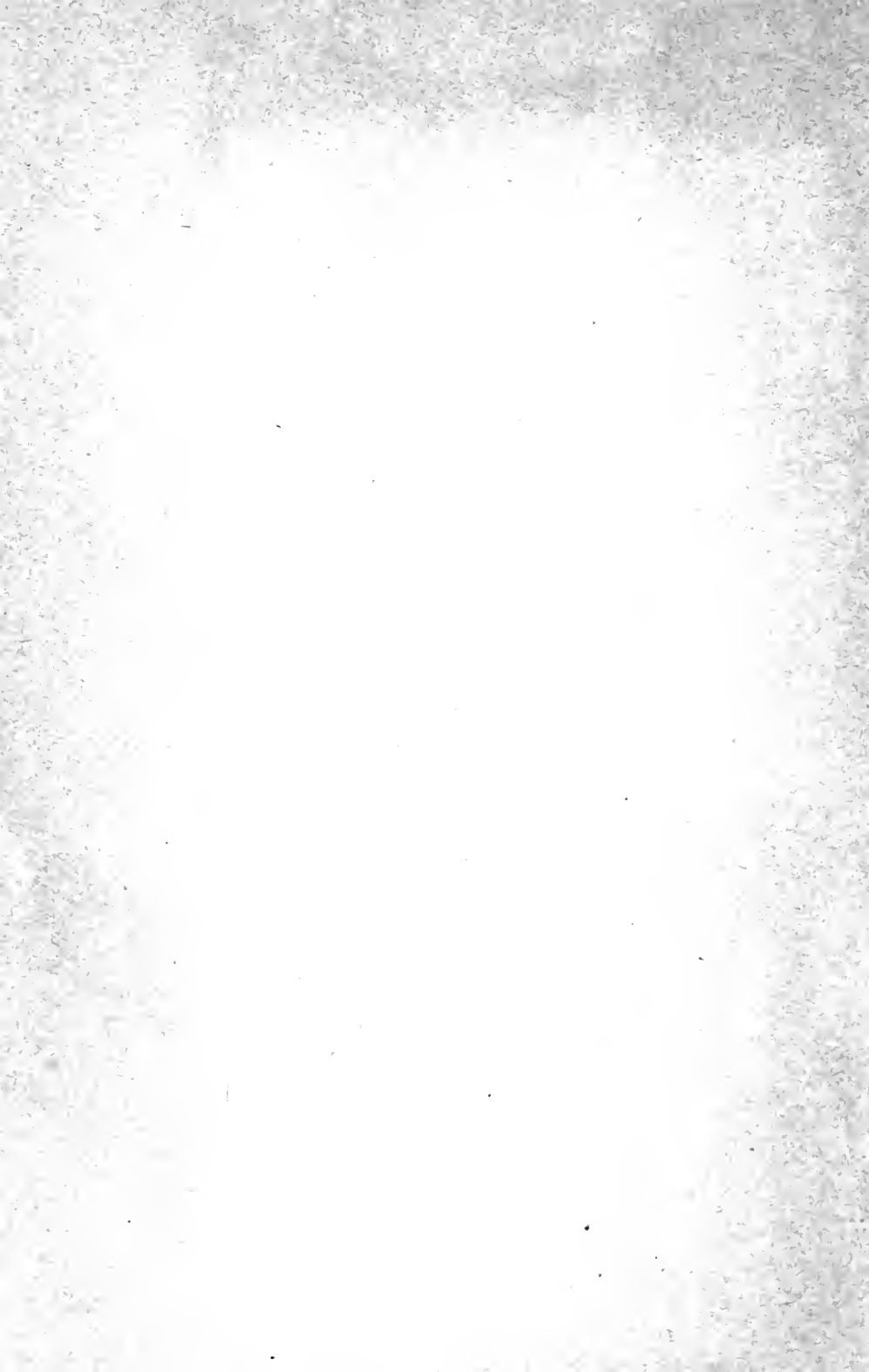
The government and parliament having taken the full responsibility of their action, every one ought, for the time being, to consider only the immediate object of our intervention: the free and voluntary help given by Canada to Great Britain, France and Belgium. Even if it is thought that the form of that help is not the most proper to reach the object in view, the time has not come to pass judgment or condemnation.

But to suggest and promote all measures tending to render more effective the action of Canada, and above all to help the country in sustaining the effort, is not only legitimate: it is an imperative duty. This I have endeavoured to do: I do not repent.

HENRI BOURASSA









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